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ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

Georgia Historical Society,

ON ITS

NINETEENTH ANNIVERSARY.

FEBRUARY 12, 1858,

By John E. Ward.

SAVANNAH:
GEORGE N. NICHOLS, PRINTER.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

SAVANNAH, 13TH FEBRUARY, 1858.

Dear Sir:—The undersigned, Committee of the “Georgia Historical Society,” take pleasure in communicating to you the following resolution, unanimously adopted last evening :

“ *Resolved*, That the thanks of this Society be tendered to the Hon. JOHN E. WARD, for his chaste and eloquent address delivered before the Society on its Nineteenth Anniversary, and that he be requested to furnish a copy for publication. ”

With sentiments of great respect and esteem,

We are, yours very truly,

I. K. TEFFT,

GEO. A. GORDON,

WM. NEYLE HABERSHAM,

EDWARD PADELFORD, JR.,

WM. S. BASINGER.

Hon. JOHN E. WARD.

SAVANNAH, 13TH FEBRUARY, 1858.

Gentlemen :—In compliance with the request of the “Georgia Historical Society,” I herewith furnish you with a copy of my address for publication.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN E. WARD.

To Messrs. I. K. Tefft, Geo. A. Gordon, Wm. Neyle Habersham,
Edward Padelford, Jr., Wm. S. Basinger, Committee.

Address.

In 1839, our fellow-citizen I. K. TEEFT, the distinguished collector of Autographs, having in his possession many valuable documents relating to the Colonial and Revolutionary history of Georgia, realizing the necessity of some institution in which the records of the State might be preserved, summoned to his aid a few kindred spirits, and with them formed the Georgia Historical Society.

To say many words upon the importance to our country and to the world at large of such an Association, would be unnecessary—its very name contains its panegyric. History not only commemorates great actions, it incites to them. Had Homer never chronicled in his immortal poem the wisdom of Ulysses, the strength of Ajax and the irresistible valor of the son of Thetis, Greece would have had fewer heroes. A nation without history, is a nation without life. Long before Guttenburg had moulded types, before Costar had cut the blocks of wood in which lay yet in embryo, the world's master,—printing,—before language had become the easily wielded instrument of thought that now it is—man, thirsting for the immortality for which he was created, sought some means of perpetuating his name, of giving to *that*, vitality and power, when he himself should lie beneath the clods of the valley, as powerless as they.—This desire speaks on the walls of buried Ninevah and ruined Egypt. This endowed with creative power the painter's brush and the sculptor's chisel. This reared the triumphal arch, decked the temple and woke the echoes with song whose tones call forth yet a responsive thrill in the world's loftiest spirits. The old Scandinavian Sea Kings, though

they won kingdom and treasure, felt themselves but half rewarded for their strife, till the Scald had struck his sounding harp and given their names a place beside the heroes of the past. In a double sense the Poet was the "*maker*"—for he made not the poem only; he breathed life into the hero whose deeds that poem commemorated. At length the Muse of History was born—of soberer brow and more quiet mien. She does not fire the blood with momentary frenzy, but her steadier impulse gives courage to the heart, vigor to the nerves, and quick sagacity to the mind. She records the triumphs of successful soldiers who have exchanged the sword for a sceptre, the military garb for the Imperial purple. The young Corsican, gifted by nature with an indomitable will and a master genius, reads and becomes a Buonaparte. She tells of the nobler power by which men have acquired that last great victory—the victory over themselves—by which all selfish impulses have sunk beneath the loftier aspiration to become a nation's benefactor. A boy, nurtured in free America, learns the lesson, and comes forth with the calm, serene wisdom, the lofty sense of duty, the steady, unwavering courage of a Washington.

And now, to-day, withdrawing for awhile from the crowded marts of business, forgetting for a brief hour the cares of the present, let us stand before this Muse of History and from those tablets on which she has engraved as with a pen of diamond the memories of the past, let us seek to read the page that records the life and character of this, our native State—the youngest of that fair band of sisters that in 1776 shook off their allegiance to the British crown. She was not the last to enter on her new career; nor has she been the slowest in her progress. Beautiful was her domain even in the wildness of uncultivated nature, when no foot but the red man's trod her green Savannas or penetrated her leafy forests, and no keel, save that of his light canoe, had divided her sparkling waters; "when beneath the same sun that now rolls over our heads, the Indian hunter pursued the panting deer—when gazing on the same moon

that now smiles for us, the Indian lover wooed his dusky mate." On the North and West she lifted herself into lofty hills, rich with the precious metals, and on the East and South lay a chain of green islands—emeralds in her queenly coronal. "Broad rivers swept through her plains their fertilizing currents, and over her rocky steeps cataracts foamed and brawled, or, dividing in their course, fell softly in fairy fountains." Nature is unchanged. The beauty of the river and the hill remain, and the soft tints of an almost tropical sky were then, as now, mirrored in the stream. And so they waited for the hour and the man—and they came.

For ages—how many, who may say? a tribe of the great family of the Muscogeas dwelt in, or more properly roamed over, this beautiful land. The hills never revealed to them the secret of their treasures, nor did they suspect the abundance that lay within the bosom of the earth, ready to start into life to reward the cultivator. More than two centuries had passed since Columbus had dared the spirits of the deep, and forced them to surrender to him the mystery they had guarded so long and so well—the secret of a new world. More than a century had rolled around since Englishmen had landed on these Western shores. The settlers of Jamestown had grown into a flourishing State. The handful of fugitives from religious persecution which had landed at Plymouth rock, had become a nation and had sent out South and West the genius of two new States, Rhode Island and Connecticut. The New Amsterdam of the Dutch on the Hudson, had changed its name and its government, and become the New York of the English. Penn had established his peaceful settlement on the banks of the Delaware. New Jersey had become consolidated by the surrender of its rights of government to the English Crown. Lord Baltimore had opened an asylum for Roman Catholics on the Chesapeake. Descendants of the pious Huguenots of France and of the loyal cavaliers of England, associated under the cumbrous constitution prepared for them by Locke—a great metaphysician but a poor statesman—had extended their settlements

as far South as Port Royal, now Beaufort. In some of these settlements the spirit of enterprise or the love of gain had prompted their founders. In others, loftier motives—the desire of civil liberty, or the Heaven sustained determination to secure “Freedom to worship God”—had been the prompters. But now a higher lesson than even that of christian liberty was to be given—the lesson of Christian charity. The Pilgrim Fathers of New England came thither from the stately homes of England, not as the flourishes of the rhetorician and the dream of the poet have represented, to assert the rights of conscience and the claims of man, as man, to freedom of faith, they came to assert the right—nay the determination of their individual selves—to found a church without a Bishop, to preach in a black coat and to pray without a book. They sought not toleration at all, but freedom, nay dominion, for themselves. If this be doubted, let the fanatical Quakers, and the one catholic spirit among them, Roger Williams, decide the doubt. Even so—all honor to the brave—earnest men and the meeker but not less heroic women, who preferred a winter voyage in a frail bark, a home on a bleak shore with an icy earth beneath their feet, a stormy sky above them and a savage foe howling all around them, to one instant’s sacrifice of what seemed to them the claims of God and of conscience. They had attained “the beginning of Wisdom” which the Song of Sirach asserts to be “the *Fear* of the Lord”—but “the end of the law is *Charity*,” and it was in the benign spirit of self-denying, charity, that civilized man first found a home under these softer skies.

We have said that, the hour came and the man. He was a man of rare endowment, combining the chivalric qualities of the knight and the gentleman, with the accomplishments of the scholar, and the benevolence of the christian. In the exercise of this last trait, he had preceded Howard in the examination of the jails of England. To judge by the jurisprudence of England at this period, it would seem that human life was considered as far less valuable than property. The fainting mother who seized with frenzied hand the loaf

for which she could not pay, to save, not herself, but her child from the clutch of death, the law condemned to a felon's doom. The simple-hearted, unsuspecting gentleman, whom a dishonest steward, or a speculating attorney had involved in debts which he could neither understand nor pay, was immured from the cheerful light of day, compelled to forego the manly exercises which had given vigor to his frame, and courage to his heart, and to sit down within the blank walls of a jail, with no companion but the memory of joys gone forever, and apprehensions not the less terrible because they were undefined. Whose heart has not been touched by the picture which the wonderful genius of Dickens has so lately exhibited of the terrible influences of such a doom—of intellect withdrawing, of honor growing dull, and self-respect dying out, till the shadow of those dark walls, the impress of that meagre life stamped themselves upon soul and body, and the man lived a scorn to others, a sad mockery to himself. From such a fate the benevolent Oglethorpe rescued many a gallant gentleman of England, some of whom, perchance, had been his own personal friends, some, perhaps, had ventured and lost all in their loyalty to a cause which Gen. Oglethorpe was well known to favor—the cause of the exiled Stuarts. It was a glorious thought to bear the prisoner from a land in which though liberated, the dark cold shadow of the prison walls must ever have fallen upon his path, to the beauty and the freedom, the sunlight and the bloom of this fair land. Hither they came, the gentleman of England, whose worst fault was, that, honest himself, he could not suspect others of dishonesty. The gallant Highlander of Scotland, whose last hope of seeing “the king have his own again,” had been trodden out beneath the hoofs of Cumberland's cavalry at Culloden—the gay son of Erin, ready alike for the battle-field or the convivial feast, for the enjoyment of wealth while he possessed it, or the adventurous pursuit of it when it had fled from him—true hearts—manly spirits—it was a good thing to open to them these fair homes. But the benevolent design of Oglethorpe ceased not here; his charity

was world-wide—wherever man bowed beneath an oppressor, wherever tyranny uttered her commands, or persecution lighted her fires, it sent forth the invitation, “Come with us, and we will do thee good.” And from the depths of the German forests, and the vine-clad borders of the Rhine, they came, in a sublime faith, journeying through hostile lands, with fearless tranquility, and singing amid the storm and the sea “their hymns of lofty cheer.”

The Indian wigwam was then the only dwelling on these shores. But what need was there of dwellings in the soft, balmy air, and beneath skies which in February seem bright with a summer’s sun! Would that for one brief hour, we could resuscitate the buried past, and bring its vanished scenes and characters before you—that we could command the magic wand of genius at whose touch the present and the actual

“Should dissolve,
And like an unsubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind.”

and in its place should rise the forest, under whose o’er-arching boughs should pass before us, now the dusky faces of the Yamacraws—now the Salzburger with his simple garb and earnest countenance, and now the Highlander with his picturesque tartan, and amongst them all, should move the gallant, good old English gentlemen—soothing the dissatisfied, cheering the faint-hearted, helping the weak, and directing all. He leads forth the Lutherans, assisting with his own hands to clear the wood through which their course lay to the spot where they would erect their Ebenezer. He heads the brave Highlanders as they march against the invading Spaniards. Touched by the submission, the helplessness and the ignorance of his savage allies, he conducts them to the foot of the English throne, endeavoring in their behalf to awaken the sympathies and secure the aid of all true christian hearts. And christians there are who hear his appeal and answer in a spirit as generous as his own. Wesley, with his full, warm heart; Whitfield, with his fervid eloquence and his more fervid charity, have left memories of themselves on

these fair shores. To the latter especially we owe the birth of an institution which neither we nor our posterity will willingly let die—the Orphan House, within whose walls many of either sex have found a refuge from ignorance and vice. Years glide away—the christian soldier returns to his native land, with a heart still full of wise and kindly schemes for the benefit of those whom he regarded as his children. Full of years, and full of honors, he passes from earth to Heaven. The little colony ceases to be the pet and plaything of royal caprice. It had dwindled under protection; it thrives through neglect, and grows strong amid difficulties. The founder of an empire must be thrown out to the storms, and have the wolf for his nurse. Before the time came for breaking off the chains which had been rivited upon us during our colonial dependence, the little colony had risen to the dignity of a State, though more than two-thirds of its territory was still the hunting ground of the Indian, or the home of wild beasts—a State, though its army was but a few hundreds in number, and its marine consisted of a few peaceful merchant ships—for

"What constitutes a State?
 Not high raised battlements or labored mound,
 Thick wall or moated gate;
 Not cities proud, with spires and turrets crown'd,
 Not bays and broad armed forts,
 Where, laughing at the storm, rich navies ride;
 Not starred and spangled courts,
 Where low-browed baseness wafts perfume to pride;
 No—MEN—high-minded MEN—
 Men who their duties know,
 But know their rights, and knowing, dare maintain,
 Prevent the long aimed blow,
 And crush the tyrant, while they rend the chain.
 These constitute a STATE."

And these Georgia could boast. They might be checked at every move for a while, for superior power was against them. They might find the faint-hearted, extinguishing with their cold coward breath the glow of patriotism which they had kindled; but no obstructions, no discouragements, could shake

the constancy of their steadfast souls. Others might continue slaves; but for *them*, they would be free, though to achieve freedom they must "shuffle off this mortal coil," and escape from thralldom through the gate of death. Noble men! their names live in our hearts. We read with a throb of pride their assertion of the rights of man to the enjoyment of "life, liberty, and property," and their temperate, yet firm appeals to the British government in behalf of their oppressed brethren of the Northern States. There is scarce a man wearing the form of man, who, when a tyrant's hand falls heavily upon himself will not rouse himself to action, and shake it off or perish in the attempt; but the glory of these men was, that no touch had yet desecrated their persons, or endangered their property, when they avowed their intention to make common cause with the struggling friends of freedom. On the one side was peace, the quiet enjoyment of wealth, the smooth words and the ready rewards of the British officials, wielding the whole organized power of the land; and as the price of all these benefits, the simple acknowledgment that they were the gifts of royal bounty. On the other, a long, deadly and doubtful struggle, in which "property, life, and sacred honor," must be pledged, and looming darkly in the dim distance, rose a prison and a gallows. But over this sombre scene, penetrating its darkness with her own pure light, and gilding with glorious brightness even the instrument of a felon's death, hovered the Spirit of Liberty. They knew they must win her by their own action.

"Who would be free must themselves strike the blow."

And their choice was made—a noble choice, and nobly maintained! The events of that period are familiar to you all. I need not tell you how the rudderless and unrigged ships rotted in our harbor, or were burned to the water's edge with the rice and indigo that freighted them; nor need I remind you that these determined men had pledged themselves to fire their houses, rather than they should afford shelter to an enemy. Well might the President of the Continental

Congress declare that in this they had given "an instance of heroic principle not excelled by any, and equalled but by few in history." But I am not pronouncing a panegyric—my part is to breathe life, if I may, into the dead past, and bid you note its acts, and kindle at its glorious example. Did I say the *dead* past? Such a past never dies! The men of that year, 1775, the men who drew up the Declaration of the Rights by which, in language temperate, yet firm, they avouch themselves entitled to all the privileges and immunities of Englishmen, who stood prepared to defend that declaration with their lives, have engraved their names on the corner-stone of our political edifice in characters that shall never be effaced. Even now these men—Bulloch and Habersham—Jones and Walton—Telfair and Tattnall—McIntosh and Elbert—Houston, and Screven, and Baker, and many more equally brave and noble spirits, are present with us. Their calm, earnest eyes seem to abjure us to preserve unimpaired the heritage won with such care and perils. They planted the seed of that noble tree which this day lifts itself so proudly to the light and air of Heaven, and shelters us so securely beneath its spreading branches. Withered be the sacrilegious hand that would mar its glorious beauty! It is not without a deeper meaning than may be recognized at a glance, that we have said, "they planted the *seed*," for in their action lay the germ of all that we have been, are, or may hope to be, as a people. They stamped their impress, not on their age only, but, as we hope, on their native land, for all time. Read their utterances in the public records of the day, and you will be surprised to perceive how simple, calm, and even conciliatory, they were in manner, how unyielding in principle—gentle as the whispering wave—stern and unbending as the granite rock. The "*suaviter in modo et fortiter in re*" have never been carried farther. And thus it is with all truly great actions. It is the shallow brook that brawls and foams along its course—the deep stream flows silently on; yet a child may dam up the first, while the last sweeps from its way with irresistible power whatever would obstruct its majestic career.

Once, in the later history of Georgia, she has stood opposed to the action of the Government for the time being. The circumstances which placed her in that position are too recent to need recapitulation. You remember how the General Government fulminated its edicts; how the very ministries of our religious faith were made to speak the language of our enemies; and you remember too with what calmness, yet, with what immoveable constancy, he who then held the helm of State, steered us through all opposition to the point to which right and honor marshaled us.

It is in this view that the present acquires its chief importance—it is the little seed within which lies folded the great interests of the future. Self-styled philosophers may mock at the history which makes the whole destinies of the race of man depend on the single act of a single pair; but observation and experience confirm its truth. In every age and in every land there are those who may in this sense be called representative men—men whose characters shall be reflected in their race and mould their fortunes to the latest time, or till some other of equal power shall give a counter direction to the forces of society. We live not then for ourselves alone, a conviction that may well stimulate us to high thought and noble action. Nor are those men who shine as stars in the firmament of history, by whose light we may steer our barks over the wide ocean of time, always those whom nature or fortune has placed in the most prominent positions, or gifted with the greatest powers. A recent historian says: “The treaties of Aix la Chapelle had been negotiated by the ablest statesmen of Europe in the splendid forms of Monarchical Diplomacy. They believed themselves the arbiters of mankind, the pacificators of the world.

“At the very time of the Congress of Aix la Chapelle, the woods of Virginia sheltered the youthful George Washington. A stripling surveyor in the woods, with no companion but his unlettered associates, and no implements of science but his compass and chain, he contrasted strangely with the imperial magnificence of the Congress of Aix la Chapelle.

And yet God had selected not Kaunidz, (the Ambassador of Austria,) nor Newcastle, (the Minister of England,)—not a Monarch of the House of Hapsburg, nor of Hanover, but the Virginia stripling, to give an impulse to human affairs, and, as far as events can depend on an individual, had placed the rights and the destinies of countless millions in his keeping.”

Let us glance our eyes along the map of the world in the early part of the sixteenth century. Great names meet us there. In England, Henry VIII, haughty and arrogant—in France, Francis I, one of the most chivalric of monarchs—in Spain, Charles the V, who added to his Imperial dignities the title by election of Emperor of Germany. These men seemed no less in quality than in rank. They attracted the eyes and thoughts of all the living men of their time. They met in peaceful pageants, and the gorgeous display of the Field of the Cloth of Gold remains to this day without a rival in our imagination. They met in war, and played at the game right royally, staking and losing Kingdoms at a blow. Among these more prominent figures, there rises upon us one which seems strangely out of place—the son of a poor man in an insignificant town in the heart of Germany. The Kings and the Emperors may be forgotten; but for the records of history they would already have perished from the world, on which they left little trace; but while the world endures, while men are thronging towards the open portals of eternity, and inquiring with the intensest interest for the way of life, that German boy will be remembered. He broke the fetters from the mind of universal man. The world can never be again what it would have been without Martin Luther.

And what in both these cases gave influence to the man and lifted him not above his contemporaries only, but above the men of all time? There were men as brave as Washington in the Revolutionary War, priests as learned as Luther in the sixteenth century, soldiers and priests more ambitious of station and influence, more determined to be great

than they. In truth, they sought not greatness ; they coveted neither power, nor renown ; they simply followed the commands of

“Duty, stern daughter of the voice of God.”

They followed her often reluctantly, feeling the Cross and not always seeing the Crown. They thought little of themselves and much of their work. Let those who would be remembered as they are, do like them.

Perhaps it may be said that only at great eras of history is it vouchsafed to a single man to rise thus above his fellows. To this I answer, it is the man who makes the era, not the era, the man. Our ideal ever lies in the present and the actual—a possibility to be achieved—even as the statue lies in the yet unchiselled marble, waiting but the touch of genius to wake it into life. There are always duties to be performed, sacrifices for others to be patiently endured, wrongs to be combatted, rights to be enforced ; and so true greatness may be won, and our names, receiving the emblazonment of history, may become a world’s treasured possession.

What ideal is there that may not be wrought out in our own time ? We talk of chivalry as of the things of the past. The glory of chivalry was that it submitted to self-denial, endured hardship and put life in peril for a noble cause. Its mailed hand wrung from the gripe of the oppressor his ill-gotten gain ; it unclasped the fetters of the enslaved ; it lifted up the down-trodden ; in its strength the feeble found refuge, and the poor were fed by its bounty. As in his secluded cloister the monk of the middle ages preserved amid surrounding darkness a feeble glimmering of intellectual light, and some sparks of that holier flame from which the fires of our christian altars were afterwards rekindled, so the knight errant of those days kept alive in men’s hearts the ideas of truth and honor, of justice and nobleness, which were in danger of being crushed and trampled out beneath the feet of the thronging tribes of men in their onward march.

At length, the wildly confused and warring elements of

society subsided into tranquility. Nations and governments sprang into being where had once been only savage hordes. A new power arose in the world—the power of the people—and their will and their force, embodied in the law, took the place of the Knight's strong arm. In her unsleeping vigilance we may rest secure. Under her protection Christianity has come forth from the cloister, teaching man to be merciful, because,

“All souls that were, were forfeit once;
And He that might the vantage best have took,
Found out the Remedy.”

Christianity wins from free warm hearts, what Chivalry forced from unwilling hands. At her appeal, the miser unlocks his stores, the oppressor lays aside his rod and chain, and man, bent beneath the load of ceaseless labor, and brutalized by vice, lifts himself upward toward God, and rejoices in the light of His countenance. Had Christianity, then, the universal sway which poetry has hymned and prophecy assured to her, we might fold our arms in idle enjoyment and feel that the determined will, the daring spirit, and the heroic heart of the knight, were as much things of the past as the iron mail in which he was accustomed to encase himself. But such is not our happy experience. The glories of the Age of Gold have passed away, and that happier era when the redeemed earth shall brighten in the rays of the Heaven to which it is rising, has not yet come. Poets may dream their dreams, self-complacent philosophers may map out their Utopias, but practical men—men of action, as well as of thought, men who live in no dream-land, but in the actual world, these men know that there is work around us that will task the most energetic, and the most daring spirit---work, before which we might well stand appalled, but that there comes to us, sounding through the ages, that old battle-cry, “**GOD FOR THE RIGHT!**” The castles in which grim prejudice has entrenched itself are to be stormed. They are strong, and multitudes have mustered to their defence; let no man gird himself for the combat who is not prepared to peril

property, station, friends, life, and what is dearer still, **GOOD NAME**. The dungeons in which ignorance has shut her captives, must be thrown open to the light of day ; but he that would perform the task must descend himself and breathe their pestiferous air. The plague-smitten victims of vice must be ministered to ; but the moral surgeons who devote themselves to their treatment, ere entering the hospitals in which they lie, must divorce themselves from all that men call pleasure, and learn to look, with an almost divine charity, on what usually inspires only disgust and loathing. Is not the very spirit of knight-errantry—the spirit which shone gloriously though all its fantastic forms, in those who gird themselves for this contest ? May not the man of to-day find as noble a field for his powers as did any of those whose names we have seen blazoned on the tablets of history ? Can we not find scope for a charity as self-denying, as world-wide, as high-hearted, as that of Oglethorpe ? If it be not ours to lay the corner-stone, as did he, to a new State, we may put the key-stone to the arch, which shall give stability to all that has been already done. By the silent influence of a noble, self-devoted life, by the fearless utterance of truth, by manly action in the cause of right, we may make this, our native State, worthy of its founder, and of the gifts with which Heaven has so richly endowed it.

One characteristic marks the truly great man of every age: he thinks much of his work, and little of himself. Oglethorpe visits the poor *gentleman*, for a gentleman he still is, in his prison. He sees the heavy eye, which strives in vain to brighten on his entrance, the languid movement where once all was brisk cheerfulness, the frame formerly erect with manly dignity, now bowed and shrunk ; he sees all this ; he does more than see, he feels it, and he asks not how James Oglethorpe may make his name great, but how he may bring new life, and health, and hope, to these sad wrecks. He has found his work and does it---that's all. Washington was pre-eminent for this quality of greatness. Nature had endowed him with military instincts. He has

a prospect of obtaining service in the navy of Great Britain. His first cruise would have been with Admiral Vernon on an expedition which offered peculiar fascinations to the adventurous spirit of youth---but his widowed mother opposed it, and his trunk, already borne to the vessel, is recalled---let the youth who considers it a proof of manhood never to submit his will to another's, especially if that other be a woman, hear---and he turns with cheerfulness to his chain and compass. The fathers of the Revolution, did they, think you, spend much time in speculating how they might best achieve honor for themselves? Did they plan the drama of the Revolution and, like skilful actors, suit themselves with parts? No! they did the work of the day and hour, careful only, whatever it was, that it should be done well. They reared the fair temple of our independence, unconscious that on its columns their own names would be inscribed. A few years later, there arose in another land revolutionists more dramatic, who constructed after the most approved classic models every act and scene of their great play. What came of that you know---how they mistook license for liberty, and

“Played such fantastic tricks before high Heaven
As made the angels weep.”

The works on which Napoleon Bonaparte rested his hopes of fame---those in which the sentiment of personal aggrandizement and personal glory lived as the animating spirit---the empires which he overturned,---the sham republics he constituted---the dynasties he established---over these the deep sea wave of Time has swept and they are gone. The landmarks which he destroyed, have been restored, and had these things made the sum of his life, with all the brilliancy of his genius and the dazzling splendor of his military prowess, he would have left only

— The name at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral, or adorn a tale.

But his true work---that which had been prepared for him by the world's Great Ruler---was done too and well done---a people drunk with fury were checked and curbed in their

mad course—the dethroned Majesty of law was re-established—the financial credit of a great but nearly bankrupt land was restored—and on the territory of those vanished Empires and Republics, he has left enduring monuments of his power and his genius, in an improved police, in canals which have opened to their produce the markets of distant countries, and roads which have made over hitherto inaccessible mountains, a highway for Europe.

It is not then by direct efforts to aggrandize themselves—it is not by waiting for extraordinary occasions of action that men build up a great name—a name which the muse of history shall delight to engrave upon her tablets—which their fellow men shall receive from her with reverence and hand down from generation to generation.

Time was indeed when the world's heroes were such as the boy conqueror of Macedon, weeping for more worlds to conquer and quenching alike his grief and his greatness in mad debauch, or the selfish destroyer of Roman liberty; but the world has grown wiser, and has learned to feel more reverence for a benefactor than for a destroyer of mankind. The verdict of history is but the expression of the public sentiment of the age in which it is written, and we feel that

Even now the voice is heard
O'er the waters calm and clear;
Even now the wave is stirred,
With an Angel presence near,
And a better "Age of Gold"
Cometh as the Bard foretold.

When no war shall bid men bleed
To o'erthrow a hostile throne,
Or to change a people's creed
That may differ from their own;
But 'neath Truth's unclouded sun
Right and Power shall aye be one."

On the fair pages of our annals have been recorded many honorable names—some that well deserve to be associated with the men of 1733 and of 1776. Statesmen—they have filled with honor offices of trust in their own State, or under

the Federal Government. In the Navy of the United States they have fearlessly braved on every sea "the battle and the breeze," and while the stars and stripes which waved above them reminded them that it was to the whole country they had pledged service and life, they still felt that one star in that brilliant constellation beamed for them with purer and brighter light than any other—the *Georgium Sidus*. Soldiers, they have fought gallantly and died bravely—let the battlefields of Mexico and the honored dust which sleeps in yonder church yard tell that tale. But I would this day lay a chaplet on the graves of men whose conflicts and whose triumphs were connected not with the battlefield, but with the forum. Let their names be breathed in tender accents, for affection still weeps upon their tombs. We cannot speak of them as we have done of men of the past, for they were our contemporaries and our fellow-citizens—treading the same streets, mingling in the same scenes with ourselves—they were our friends,—we have caught fervor from their kindling eyes—inspiration from their glowing lips—courage from the grasp of their hands. We have missed them from our daily walks, and felt a painful sense of loss as we listened in vain for the familiar voice, and sought in vain the quick and kindly glance. You, gentlemen, of the Georgia Historical Society, have peculiar cause for these feelings, for both were active members of your Association, and one of them, your first President.

How vividly rises before me the slight but well knit, active form, the pale face, the thoughtful brow, the earnest eyes which made up the impressive aspect of Robert M. Charlton, the acute lawyer, the upright Judge, the scholar, the poet, the fond and tender father, the true and devoted husband, the christian, "*vixit moriturus, moritur que victurus in æternum.*" It has been the custom to speak of the legal profession as necessarily inimical to those qualities which, according to the great English Satirist, mark the noblest work of God, "an honest man"! but who ever knew Robert M. Charlton and would have hesitated to confide in his lightest word as in a

contract signed and sealed ; what a fountain of tender sympathies, of life-giving charity was his heart ! Over quick, natural sensibilities the imaginative temperament of the poet shed brighter and warmer hues—and what fervor did his poetry lend to his logic, what grace to his oratory ! We may seem to have said much and yet we have not touched that which crowned and hallowed his every gift and every grace : these rare endowments were perfected with the spirit and reflected visibly to every eye, the light of Heaven.

Say, then, he is dead ! Believe it not : his spirit lives not in Heaven more surely, than his influence remains a living power on earth. The profession he adorned is the purer in his native State—the city to which he belonged is the more honored, for his life. His memory is one of our treasured possessions—we will guard it well—

“ Green be the turf above thee,
Friend of my earlier days !
None knew thee but to love thee,
None named thee but to praise.”

Beside the warm, living portraiture which we are conscious our words have but faintly presented, we would place another, more grand, it may be, in its proportions, though less warm in its coloring, and less illuminated by that tender light with which the heart halos the pictures it enshrines.

To those who met him in the daily walks of life, John Macpherson Berrien is recalled, as one who exhibited in a very remarkable degree, the graceful courtesy of the polished gentleman, and the elegant cultivation of the thoroughly furnished scholar. In some respects, he belonged to another age than ours. The busy man of the present day shows himself what he is ; he moves with hurried step, and has few words and fewer mere courtesies to spare. No one could suspect Judge Berrien of being an idle man, yet who ever knew him betrayed by hurry into the forgetfulness of the smallest courtesy, whether to his friends in the intercourse of society, in the senate, or to his antagonists at the bar ? It was there that he showed greater than in the bar, that his genius

rose triumphant. Who that ever saw him there, his face radiant with the glow of conscious power---who that ever heard those tones which rang on the charmed ear like the notes of a silver clarion, can forget the impression he made ! Who that ever listened to his plea but can remember how he swayed his judgment, fired his heart, and influenced his whole being at his will ! With him died, as we believe, the greatest advocate not of Georgia only but of the United States. Webster's granite mind dealt with great constitutional questions with unequalled power, but as an advocate at the bar, the exquisite tact, the soul-subduing eloquence of Berrien surpassed even him. It will be long, ere in this State, or in this Union, we shall find for him among living men a rival, or a peer. If Charlton's grave should be decked with the green turf and shadowed by the over-arching boughs which poets love, the monument of John Macpherson Berrien should be of purest marble, polished and wrought with the most artistic skill. His State's men will never hear his name without a glow of pride.

Charlton ! Berrien ! Their names have become historic in their native State. You, gentlemen, will not suffer them to perish ; especially will it be your pride and pleasure to cherish that of John McPherson Berrien, your first President.

We have read from the tablets of history the record of some of those names, preserved from oblivion by their great and good qualities. We have seen that they lived not for themselves or for their age alone, but for the world and for all time. We have endeavored also to show that the opportunity for noble action died not with them, that the world has still work to do which requires strong hands and pure hearts, and though it crown not the workers with laurels while they live, history will not fail to write their names upon her page and commit it to your faithful keeping. It is yours to preserve green the memory of the honored dead. From your hands, the living wait their reward---the proud reward of a name that shall be to children and to children's children a star guiding them in safety and honor through midnight

glooms and over trackless seas. We all expect your verdict;
let it be faithful and impartial.

“Who that surveys this span of earth we press,
This speck of life in Time’s great wilderness,
This narrow isthmus ’twixt two boundless seas,
The past, the future—two eternities!
Would sully the bright spot, or leave it bare,
When he might build him a proud temple there,
A name, that long shall hallow all its space,
And be each purer soul’s high resting place.”





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